

**CAMDEN DOWNTOWN PLAN
PUBLIC FORUM #2
March 14, 2012**

The Public Forum was convened at 6:30 pm on March 14 in the Waterfalls Event Center in the Knox Mill complex with nearly ninety-five citizens attending. Town Manager Pat Finnigan thanked everyone for coming out in such good numbers; this is proof of the extraordinary amount of outreach that Brian Hodges, Development Director, and Master Plan Project Manager, has been doing to get the word out and to seek input. Ms. Finnigan drew attendees attention to various display boards scattered around the room that illustrate the various outreach projects that were done to draw attention to this evening's meeting, and to the Master Plan itself. The interest in Town is obvious; over 300 responses to a survey is a phenomenal result, and those results will be made available this evening.

Ms. Finnigan commented on a new ad that will run in the next issue of *Maine Biz*; the new slogan is being previewed tonight in the lobby -- "We roll out the Red Carpet not the Red Tape"—and will be featured in the article the magazine is doing about the mid-coast (with a special emphasis on Camden).

Ms. Finnigan then introduced Michael Nash, owner and developer of the Knox Mill properties. Mr. Nash had offered the conference facility to the Town for this evening's meeting and he welcomed everyone to the Center. He stated how much he was looking forward to participating in the Master Plan process. They are thrilled with the project, impressed with all the hard work that has been done, and looking forward to the end product and to participating in a big way.

PART 1: RECAP, FORUM #1 & SURVEY ~ Dennis Lachman

➤ **BACKGROUND & PURPOSE of the MASTER PLAN:**

Mr. Lachman introduced the concept for the Master Plan that originated with the Camden Comprehensive Plan's Economic Vision and Goals for Camden's Downtown which, boiled down, means Camden wants high-income, year-round jobs in a pedestrian friendly thriving Downtown. This has been the basis for the development of the Master Plan, and the Team will keep coming back to this concept as they describe the components of the Plan.

The premise of the Master Plan is this:

- 1) That Economic Development results in residents and visitors being drawn to the Downtown by essential public services and a balanced mix of vibrant year-round businesses.
- 2) Combine this with physical improvements to the streetscape of the Downtown that promote and encourage this development: Access corridors to the harbor, harbor-side parks, and attractive architecture with protected pedestrian access through-out the Downtown.
- 3) The result is that the Quality of Life in Camden is enhanced by having year-round, higher-income jobs within walking distance to a pedestrian-friendly downtown and harbor.

➤ FORUM #1 ~ THEMES: What Do You Think?

The purpose of the first Forum was to take the pulse of the community by holding informal discussions to exchange thoughts and provide the Team with feedback. About eighty participants were asked to define their top three hopes and top three concerns for the Downtown, and at the end of the evening the results ratified the Master Plan concept:

Top Hopes:

#1: QUALITY OF LIFE: Maintain Camden's unique quality of life, which draws businesses and residents to the area, while making this a better place to live and work.

#2: Activity, including the hope that the Town again has "a sense of pedestrian energy – visible activity – on the streets and sidewalks to attract visitors to stop and to attract locals" to come back downtown.

Top Concerns:

#1: JOBS! JOBS! JOBS! The downtown needs to be vital year round and we need good, well-paying, year-round jobs – lots of them.

#2: Economic Development and Business atmosphere should "Marry the friendly atmosphere of Camden with responsible business development".

#3: The Character of the Town should evolve with changes made Downtown to encourage development not be revolutionized by drastic changes.

Mr. Lachman noted that the audience was seeing only a sampling of the results of this exercise; the full report of the Public Forum, including the entire listing of Hopes and Concerns is available for the public to view on the Town's Downtown Master Plan web page.ⁱ

➤ SURVEY THEMES:

Offering a brief overview of the Survey results, Mr. Lachman noted the following about the survey:

- The top 5 Hopes selected by survey respondents ratified the components of the Master Plan Concept; and
- The results mirrored the ranking of Hopes for the future of the Town expressed by those attending Forum #1;

#1 Quality of Life: Over 70% ranked preserving the current quality of life as their top hope;

#2 Revitalizing the downtown economy: 52% of respondents think it is very important to bring more jobs to the downtown; and 46% feel the same about having more “regular” shops downtown;

#3: Parking: 80% of respondents think there is enough parking in Town except during the height of the summer;

#4: Planning: 43% of respondents want to see locals involved more in planning decisions; that is the purpose of this evening’s Forum; and

#5: Pedestrians and a River Walk: 42% feel it is very important to make the Town more pedestrian friendly, and 37% would like to see a River Walk and a Harbor Walk downtown.

- The comments offered at Forum #1 regarding concerns that need to be addressed were also in sync with survey results.

Mr. Lachman noted that the full results of the survey are also available on the Downtown Master Plan web page, including the section on comments – all 332 of them. He added that this kind of response to a survey illustrates what he and his Team have found: Camden residents are the most engaged of any community they have worked in. Because so many people are actively interested, the Team’s discussions here have proven very productive, and their development of the Master Plan has been very much informed by the continued participation of engaged townspeople.

~ THE MASTER PLAN AS A ROAD MAP ~

Mr. Lachman asked the audience to keep in mind that the previous studies done for the Town and referenced by his Team – The TIF project, the *Economic Development Analysis & Action Plan*, and the *Strategic Economic Development Action Plan* – were all focused on economics; the Master Plan is more than that. It is a “Road Map” to economic vitality that sets the stage for physical and economic improvements by integrating the Town’s economic and physical assets in a “Self-improving Loop”. Enhancements to the “Physical Stage” benefit the “Economic Stage”; and by following the phased recommendations of the Master Plan’s road map, these enhancements are paid for through increased tax revenues generated as a result of the resulting economic growth.

The over-arching goal is to maintain the Quality of Life: the Economic Stage is set to provide Year-round, higher-income jobs; and the Physical Stage is set so that workers are within walking distance to those jobs by way of a pedestrian-friendly downtown and harbor. This evening’s presentation will discuss Camden’s assets – physical and economic – and the Plan to leverage, improve and integrate these assets to create a vital year-round Downtown.

PART 2: UPDATES & RECENT ACTIVITY

➤ **BUILDING INVENTORY: Denis Lachman**

Mr. Lachman provided an example of the Building Inventory Data Base included within the Master Plan. He has provided the following information for each commercial property in the project area:

- Number of Floors and Total Net of Leasable Area (square footage)
- For each floor: Square footage; Current Use and Comments; Number of Persons Employed; and Job Types. There will be additional information provided in the inventory as well, including the ownership and specific location information as well as photos of 168 properties. But, the data regarding the space available for use are the most important components of the building inventory; the data will tell what businesses are here now; surveys will tell what businesses people want in Town; the data will tell what spaces are available for those uses; and the Town will be able to target specific businesses to attract them to specific spaces in Town.
- For each building he has also noted when there was access to upper floors by elevator, and whether the property was contributing to a relevant Historic District.

The Building Inventory Physical Data Summary Section provides information on the total square footage available on all floors of all buildings as well the percentage of the whole that is occupied for each. The Inventory also includes a commercial and residential breakdown of the occupied spaces by square footage and by percentage. The data has been compiled to show the following:

- Floor Use by Occupancy/Business Type;
- Building Use (by Percentage and Square Footage) of each Occupancy Type;
- The number of people employed listed by floor;
- Occupational Type by category and the number of people employed within each; and
- A Breakdown of Offices by Type and Number Employed.

The data also includes a listing of buildings potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register, as well as information on parking lots within Camden's TIF District with figures that will show the size and capacity of each lot - among other things.

Mr. Lachman concluded by saying this data is meant to be a snapshot in time and is not intended to show specific current conditions. Its value is that it can be used to show use trends throughout the buildings, throughout occupations, etc.; the data can be extracted in many combinations to inform economic development discussions.

➤ **ECONOMICS: REVITALIZATION, FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION: Rodney Lynch**

Because the bulk of the evening's presentation is being given over to the Streetscape component of the Plan, Mr. Lynch gave only a cursory overview of the Economic Development section.

➤ **Introduction:**

The long term economic goals are to provide a reference document and a framework for attracting new businesses, strengthening existing businesses, and increasing employment opportunities. The Master Plan will not in itself create jobs but is a road map for the Town to foster an environment and opportunities in the Downtown conducive for job and business retention, expansion and creation all the way from technology to incubators. The Plan itself does not create jobs: What it does is create an environment to attract businesses that will create jobs. The Plan is created to give the Town some idea of what the Town can look like down the road – twenty or twenty-five years from now, if certain steps are taken.

➤ **Economic Development Clusters:**

Mr. Lynch identified seven clusters of the local economy that he believes can be leveraged and built upon to encourage development:

- Technology: Smart phones, Wi-Fi, computers, etc.
- The Creative Economy (The Opera House, the Library and a Movie Theater, e.g.)
- Events and Conferences (PopTech, Camden Conference, Juice, etc.)
- Recreational: A 4-season recreational area is one of the keys to a year-round economy.
- New Business Growth: Concentrate on incubators and technology
- History and Architecture
- Tourism and Visitors

➤ **Outline for Each Cluster: Mr. Lynch developed a full proposal for each of the clusters that included the following components:**

- Policy: Having a specific policy for development of the cluster is important when looking for funding for projects
- Introduction: An Overview
- Description
- Problems
- Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest
- Action Steps Strategies
- Key Funding Strategies: The Heart of the Economic Development Section – How to pay for the Plan looking at various specific funding sources.
- Employment Opportunities
- Relevant Economic Values: Mr. Lynch conducted interviews over four or five months to discuss economic values with local business owners.

- Preliminary Recommendations from Each Cluster (an overview): 1st Steps the Town can take:
 - Technology: The Town becomes a leading enabler, facilitator and advocate for technological changes in the Downtown;
 - Creative Economy: Renovate the 2nd and 3rd Floors of the Opera House using TIF funding; Re-establish the former movie theater located at 10 Mechanic Street;
 - Events and Conferences: Form a study group to formulate strategies, recommendations, and to develop facilities and funding resources for either new events, or for spinning off additional venues from existing conferences and festivals for the purpose of ensuring the Town's continue niche in this area of the region's creative economy;
 - Recreation: Market the Camden area as Maine Coast's premiere 4-Season Recreational area. This is more than just skiing at the Snow Bowl: It involves the State Park ski trails and hiking – there is an incredible system of trails including the State Park trail system.
 - New Business Development: Develop a business incubator in an existing vacant or underutilized building or, for the purpose of filling-in upper level floor spaces;
 - History and Architecture: Develop a Camden History Trail or a Historic Camden Tour embracing the new technologies by developing a history tour app for mobile hand held devices such as smart phones; and,
 - Tourism and Visitors: Expand beyond traditional tourism to include recreational and cultural tourism for enticing younger tourists to the area.

QUESTIONS:

In response to a question about what kinds of jobs might be created within the various sectors, Mr. Lachman first replied that the Master Plan was not a job creation plan, and reiterated that the intent of the Plan is to create an environment that would bring businesses to Town – businesses that would create jobs. The speaker had stated that Camden needs production jobs, not service jobs – what would the plan do to support the creation of production jobs? Mr. Lynch replied that Camden was never going to be a manufacturing Town again, too much has changed for that to happen; those jobs left to go south where it was cheaper to do business – that hasn't changed. Some of the jobs that he sees being created through the development of various clusters are, for example: Incubator businesses that create the services that the service industries need – this is a fast-growing business sector; R&D into technology product development; and, another industry that can be promoted in Camden is Maine-made products. When Camden was a manufacturing town it wasn't diversified, and when the mills left there was nothing here; it is important that the Town be diversified going into the future.

Another citizen asked if there would be a breakdown on the “Maine-made Products” industry and what it includes. Mr. Lynch replied that the Chamber-of-Commerce had done a study and it would be included as a supplement to the Plan.

Leonard Lookner, a local business owner, commented that there needs to be a good plan to stimulate winter business. Many of the growth areas proposed by Mr. Lynch are summer businesses, and Camden doesn't need that business to grow. He is hoping that the Town will receive information in the Plan as to what can be done to create year-round business. Mr. Lynch replied that there are components of the proposal that address the development of a year-round

economy: the increase in winter recreation opportunities and the business that brings with it; the conference business can grow into a year-round business; incubator businesses are year-round businesses; and a movie theatre would help bring business downtown year-round. The hardest part of the Plan is how to make the Town a year-round community like it was years ago, that is not an easy thing to do.

Hamilton Hall asked if any industrial zones would be re-zoned for a different use as part of this Plan. Would there be any property that is currently commercial that would change use and not be able to be commercial again? What zoning changes are proposed? He is most concerned that the Downtown – the Mill area - will never be able to be used industrially again. Mr. Lynch replied that these would be questions for the local Planning Board to answer; it was not addressed within the Plan.

➤ **STREETSCAPE PLANNING & DESIGN – PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS:**
Regina Leonard

Ms. Leonard prepared a detailed presentation of the Team's recommendations for improvements to traffic and pedestrian safety and enhancing the Downtown streetscape; the following will be a brief summary of this very complex proposal. For those wanting detailed information, the Team's Power Point presentation is available on the Town's web site: www.camdenmaine.gov (Downtown Master Plan).

Recommendations for improving the Streetscape are intertwined with other recommendations for economic development, and, in addition many of the recommendations included here were not born of this Plan, but were born in earlier work done by and for various Committees of the Town. One example - the Economic, Physical and Quality of Life visions included in the Vision for Camden developed by CEDAC in 2009:

- Economic: Residents and visitors are drawn to the center by essential public services and a balanced mix of vibrant year-round businesses;
- Physical: Access corridors to the harbor, harbor-side parks, and attractive architecture with protected pedestrian access; and
- Quality of Life: Year-round, higher-income jobs within walking distance to a pedestrian-friendly downtown and harbor.

In addition to relying on the visions as guiding principles, Ms. Leonard also turned to the two economic development Action Plans cited earlier, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan adopted by the Town in 2007.

➤ **IVENTORY & ASSESSMENT:**

MAJOR ISSUES & CONSIDERATIONS: (Identified by the Camden Downtown Working Group)

- Pedestrians: Improve walkability with safe crossings and routes, better connectivity, and an enhanced pedestrian environment – the streetscape should say “Come walk here, come shop here, come live here!”
 - Traffic: Calm traffic, reduce congestion, and promote more side street activity – the two main issues are traffic speed and traffic volume and moving traffic off Route 1 is a major goal of the proposal.
 - Parking: Make parking spaces easier to find; and
 - Signage: Improve directional and information signage – “Way Finding”.
- **STREETSCAPE TREATMENT:** Ms. Leonard identified three areas of Town where recommendations will be made to three concerns: traffic, signage and pedestrian safety.
- 1) The “Northern Gateway” at the intersection of Routes One and 52 (Mountain Street);
2) The “Downtown Center Hub” where Mechanic Street, Route One, and Bayview and Commercial Streets intersect; and, 3) The “Southern Gateway” at Union Street and Route One. The Plan recommends carrying the same street lights, sidewalks, street trees, and other design elements from Gateway to Gateway and through the Downtown Hub. From the Hub these common elements will be extend out side streets with the intention that this will physically extend what is thought of as the “Downtown” to areas either side of Route One.
- The goals for the areas are: 1) To create a feeling of arrival; 2) To set the tone for the downtown as a pedestrian-focused place; 3) To calm traffic; 4) To clarify vehicular routes; and 5) To provide information with signage.
- Gateway Design Tools: To better define the route the Plan would: 1) Limit the size and quantity of curb cuts; 2) add streetscape elements (lighting, sidewalks, trees); and 3) incorporate directional signage and Gateway signage. To improve Pedestrian Safety here the Plan would: 1) Introduce bump outs and wider sidewalks to improve the visibility between cars and pedestrians; 2) reduce pedestrian crossing distances; and 3) switch to ladder style crosswalks. Intersection safety improvements would include a 3-way Stop sign in addition to cross walks on all four sides. (The Power Point presentation on the Town’s website includes a design overview with details illustrating the recommendations for the Southern Gateway at Union Street.)
 - Downtown Center Hub Design Tools: The goals are to: 1) Clarify vehicular circulation; reduce confusion; 2) Relieve traffic congestion; 3) Improve parking

opportunities; 4) Enhance the pedestrian environment; and 5) Provide information with improved signage.

Crosswalk styles will be changed to make them more visible and they will be better located. Parking will be pulled away from the crosswalks with bump-outs making the intersection safer for everyone. Signage will be more pedestrian scaled with some vehicle-oriented directional and information signs. Clarifying the intersections and how traffic moves was the major challenge. But new streetscape elements and re-organization of some existing features, along with a comprehensive sign program, will all work together to create the pedestrian-friendly environment that make a Downtown work. (The Power Point presentation on the Town's website includes a design overview with details illustrating the recommendations for the Downtown Central Hub.)

➤ **SIGN PROGRAM:**

Implementing a Sign Program involves concepts like tiered levels of signage that start alerting drivers to various options *before* they arrive, and pedestrian eye-level signs that direct them to their destination with a series of signage moving from the general to the specific. Ms. Leonard informed the audience that designing successful sign programs is a separate area of expertise, but she showed two options other towns have implemented successfully so the Town understands what can lie ahead in this regard. One method involves signs of the same color and design, the other signs are color coded either by districts of town or by business. Part of the Sign Program in the future could involve kiosks located in various places downtown, or large signs showing area detail: there are many options. Some of the suggestions in the Plan can be easily implemented, but an effective sign program is developed through a comprehensive design formula.

➤ **PARKING & CIRCULATION:**

Parking Improvement Goals: RE-THINKING PARKING

- Update Pedestrian Links and Streetscape Amenities
- Incorporate Directional Signage along specified routes
- Adopt a more comprehensive and integrated approach to managing parking that will help revitalize the Downtown.

The Tools: The first step in re-thinking parking solutions is to address the perception that there is a parking problem, and then to adopt a comprehensive parking management strategy:

- Manage existing spaces more efficiently:
Unlined parallel parking spaces park 10% more cars in the same area

- Treat parking Downtown as a commodity:
Manage vacancy rates in prime curbside spaces by using parking meters to encourage turn-over so people driving through Town are likely to see open spaces. Variable meter rates keep the vacancy rate stays at an optimum level.
- Set large vehicle parking restrictions and designate loading zones for delivery trucks. Good signage will pull RV's off Route 1 *before* they get Downtown.
- Encourage off-street parking: Centralize and capitalize shared parking where people can park and stay; Re-think the Town's off-street parking requirements in the Zoning Ordinance to create more density and development Downtown; Re-introduce a parking shuttle during busy times.
- Encourage alternate forms of transportation with bike paths, bike racks & bike rentals.
- Make sidewalk improvements to increase walkability.

Circulation Improvement Goals:

IMPROVING THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

- Capitalize on Camden's natural, scenic, historic and recreation resources
- Improve connectivity between downtown, parking and open spaces
- Draw pedestrians to lesser used areas of the Downtown
- Enhance recreation opportunities

The Tools:

- Integrate a River Walk and a Harbor Walk to pull people to these areas of Town
- Create a new opportunity for public green space in the Downtown by removing a portion of the existing boardwalk along the river and developing a Mill Pond Park as a destination for walkers at the end of the River Walk (See the web site for concept designs for Mill Pond Park.)
- Integrate cultural and physical highlights with interpretive signage along the routes (The Camden History Walk project)
- Way-finding: Take advantage of special streetscape treatments and signage tools like those used along Boston's Freedom Trail: plaques, brick paths incorporated into the sidewalk, and painted stripes color-coded to various paths

CREATING RECREATIONAL CONNECTIONS

The Goal: To enhance links to recreational and regional destinations

The Tool: Implement the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan already adopted by the Town:

- Dedicate bike lanes and shared pedestrian routes – this has already been laid out in the Town’s Plan and just needs to be implemented.
- Create bicycle route maps and route markers
- Provide bike racks Downtown
- Outfit shuttles with bike racks
- Implement shoulder and sidewalk improvements recommended in the Bike and Pedestrian Plan using route marker signage
- Create a regional walking and hiking map

PART 4: SMALL GROUP FEEDBACK

The attendees at the Forum were asked to break into ten groups to answer 4 questions regarding the Master Plan Concept. These are the results, reported back to the meeting from the break-out groups, and sorted here into common categories of response. The order of those categories is not an indication of the priority of importance these issues were assigned by the participants.

1. What are your first impressions of the Streetscape Concept?

Overall Impression - Positive: Group #1 – wholehearted support, but using streetscape design elements effective in Belfast, Rockland and Bath as examples that worked to control traffic and create pedestrian atmosphere doesn’t relate to Camden – they all have by-passes; Group #2 – streetscape design very positive for residents; Group #3 – good 1st impression especially like downtown bump outs with trees & benches, but not the resulting loss of parking; Group #4 – like the softening of downtown appearance with visually appealing design like bump outs and trees, and like that Plan stresses our quality of life – this can be used to attract jobs; Group #5 – Excellent design that will work; Group #6 - Strongly favor bump outs and promoting pedestrian-friendly concept; Group #7 – Good concepts but don’t overuse bump outs – too many is confusing to the driver; Group #8 – Some examples used won’t work in Camden because traffic pattern here is different. Too many ideas to implement all at once – move slowly; Group #9 – Liked the Plan and the presentation, but it is a hard concept to imagine in place. Maintain the integrity of the Downtown and don’t carry the theme too far; and Group #10 – Concerned that too much streetscape and landscaping will make Camden look like other larger Towns, but changes are needed for pedestrian safety.

2. What aspects do you support and why? Do you have a favorite?

- Bump Outs: Like idea for making pedestrian safer (3);
 Like seating areas and plantings (4);
 Like traffic-calming results;
 Helpful intersection improvements;
 Safety benefits: defines traffic and pedestrian spaces;
 Combine brick sidewalks with concrete bump outs perhaps to further define areas;
- Crosswalks: Ladder style: Yes - more visible and safer for pedestrians; make the crosswalks concrete with brick set in as detail;
- Gateways: Like the concept (all);
 Firms up where the edges of Downtown are;
 Critical to setting the stage for entering Downtown;
- Parking:
- Loss of parking spaces:
 - In favor of restricting parking to enhance Downtown;
 - Like trolley route between parking areas;
 - OK to give up spaces for the streetscape design - benefits are worth it;
 - Pay for parking/meters:
 - Raises “parking awareness” of value-added parking;
 - Support parking restrictions – timed spaces, etc;
 - Support parking fees;
 - Create financial incentives to limit vehicular use;
 - Like parking meters – many Downtowns have meters;
 - Charging for parking keeps people from driving around Town looking for spaces after 2-hour limit is up – will help with traffic;
 - Other:
 - Like designated delivery zones – but where will they be and will there be enough room; Designate delivery times as well;
 - Like idea of on-line apps for parking;
 - Try un-lined parking concept to increase spaces available (2);
 - Like development of shared parking concept;
 - “Encourage” Downtown employees to use more remote parking;
- River Walk/Other walks:
- Great way for downtown workers to get exercise;
 - Like walking trails linked to outlying areas concept;
 - Like development of on-line walking tour apps;
 - Like River Walk to Mill Pond Park very much;
 - Like Mill Pond Park idea – would like more parks – keep walk going to a park at the Tannery as well;

Like River Walk to bring Downtown energy toward Mill;
Great pedestrian enhancement;

- Signage: Like consistency of design; like color-coded concept;
It is important to help people get where they want to go;
Need this kind of organized sign program;
Good simple concept for signage – especially need directions to parking;
Signage directing to parking areas can help free up Route 1 parking;
Like business directional signs on kiosks in bump-outs;
- Other: Like the Opera House proposed improvements – will increase use of facility;
Streetlights: Don't copy the current design – make all of the lamps down-lighted
– will encourage more people to live Downtown if lighting isn't intrusive;
Current lighting is too bright;

3. Which aspect concern you – and why?

- Bump Outs: Loss of four lanes of traffic on Mechanic at Route 1 not good;
Winter road maintenance impacted by bump-outs that won't be used for sitting - perhaps there is a way to make them seasonal? How do you deal with snow removal?
Take away too many prime parking spaces - Locals like the 15 minute spaces (2);
Keep size and number to scale for a small Downtown;
Try in one area first to see if it works and is accepted;
Is one needed at Atlantic Ave as well?
- Crosswalks: Boxed design of multiple crosswalks: not attractive; confusing.
Ladder style: No (5)
- Gateways: Concerned that creation of curb cuts at Stop & Go will make traffic worse;
Move Southern Gateway location further south – perhaps to Town Line (4);
Move Chamber to new Gateway – call it a welcome center (3);
Make Chamber building into a Visitors' Center - not the Chamber (2);
Redesign at Stop & Go makes intersection even more confusing;
Southern Gateway design needs re-working;
Union Street and Belmont intersection is dangerous and should be addressed in the Plan;
- Parking: Loss of parking spaces:
Results will create an inconvenience for residents;

Businesses won't like this because it will take visitors away from their storefronts;

Need to keep parking on Public Landing (2) – instead plant more trees, design a better lay-out, make walking there safer, soften the design;

Create more very short-term parking spaces where they make sense – where people do quick errands;

Pay for parking/meters:

Need discounted rates or Parking Cards for locals;

No to meters (5) - include plans for a parking kiosk where people can buy parking tickets – locals get discount;

No to any pay for parking – too complicated to manage;

Presence of meters is not welcoming;

Parking meters are less negative than a parking ticket - but both are negative;

Be thoughtful in developing a charging system for parking – look at other Towns to see what has worked and what has not;

Other:

Leave parking alone – there is no problem;

Don't need a shuttle – it doesn't work;

Parking requirements of Zoning Ordinance need to be removed – they restrict growth and development in the Downtown and are not necessary;

Need to pin point locations of outlying parking areas;

River Walk/Other walks:

Concerned that Harbor Walk has disappeared from Plan;

Work on links to Snow Bowl and Lake Megunticook;

Need to see more detail on how the River Walk links to Main Street;

Include pedestrian connectivity to parking from River Walk;

Signage:

Stop sign at Union and Route 1 – language needs clarity – current design dangerous;

No to signs for walking trails – at least not painted stripes on sidewalks.

No to too many signs (5);

One large map instead (2);

Sign concept will complicate finding the way; too many already - too cluttered;

Keep signage simple and clear – this is a small Town, no complicated program needed;

Other:

Keep design simple; keep authenticity and preserve historic character – no “Disney World” here;

More street trees (2) – perhaps small flowering trees as an added attraction;

Implement overall streetscape design in phases;

4. Are there additional considerations that have not been addressed that you believe should be?

➤ **#1 Complaint: There is no focus on Year-round Vitality:**

No year-round business focus to Plan (8): Where are the year-round jobs; need to stress bringing year-round regular shops and stores back to downtown; bring back self-sufficiency of Town – ability to get what you need in town; Economics not addressed sufficiently; Economics needs to address regional issues not just Camden; No mention of implementation of the Economic Plan

- Public Landing: Should be addressed (5) – one of best parcels in Town and underutilized as parking; want a Harbor Park there and Harbor Walk; protect fishermen's access
- Address use of first floor of Opera House (3)
- Address use of Tannery Site – park, location of Farmer's Market – draw people out that way as well (2)
- Expand development of on-line apps
- Current condition of sidewalks (lack of maintenance): How will the Town be able to take care of even more sidewalks and curbing?
- No changes should be made that require a change in zoning away from industrial or commercial; Plan should include recommendations for changes to Zoning to make Plan work
- Make Bayview Street 1-way
- Address ways to attract younger tourists – nightlife, a theatre – how to fund?
- Business groups from outside Downtown should be included and involved
- The Farmer's Market should be made more visible
- How do we encourage incubator businesses?

PART 5: NEXT STEPS & WRAP UP: Denis Lachman

The next public venue where the Master Plan concept will be presented is before the Select Board on the 17th of April.

To help answer the question: How do we pay for this? The Lachman Group will be holding a workshop, also on the 17th titled: Financing Private, Non-Profit & Municipal Project by Leveraging Rehabilitation Tax Credits.

The Master Plan discusses funding options the Town can consider as they move to the second stage of the four part process to implement the Master Plan. This workshop will put those funding concepts into real scenarios, and everyone is invited to attend – building owners, Town officials, and homeowners.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Hollingsworth, Recording Secretary

ⁱ The Power Point presentation is available on the Town of Camden's website at: <http://www.camdenmaine.gov>: Downtown Master Plan; Activity to Date.